

Washington, DC—U.S. Congressman Mike Pence delivered the following opening statement at today's House Foreign Affairs Committee hearing regarding the situation in Libya:

"I want to thank you Madame Chairman for calling this hearing and thank the Deputy Secretary for his years of service to the country.

"We're at war in Libya. I know there's careful parsing of words to describe our military action – 'no-fly plus,' and the rest, but we're at war in Libya. And while I'm troubled with how we went to war in Libya, I would never jeopardize support for our troops. But I don't believe the President of the United States has the authority to take America to war without Congressional approval where our safety and vital national interests are not directly threatened.

"I also don't believe in limited war. I believe that if America chooses to go to war, then by God, you go to war to win.

"Now the president said this week that it would be a mistake to broaden our mission. He said, 'we went down that road in Iraq,' and we're certainly going down a different road than we went in Iraq. In Iraq we had a clear objective, we had Congressional bipartisan approval in both houses, then through international support, then through trial and sacrifice of blood and treasure, we prevailed.

"Here in Libya, no clear objective, no Congressional approval, uncertain and wavering international support, aerial bombardment - we are on a different road.

“So Mr. Deputy Secretary, I’d like to ask you in the course of conversation today: Tell me why Congress should not immediately bring an authorization to the floor of the House of Representatives that would define our mission or end this mission and bring the clarity that the Constitution and the American people expect.”

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